



Event Report

Event: Natural Kendal Nature Recovery Festival, Kendal

Date: 19 July 2025

Event Overview: The Natural Kendal Nature Recovery Festival 2025 provided an opportunity to engage the public, stakeholders and local partners on nature recovery across the Lake District and surrounding catchments. Over 1200 people visited the festival, where R4ever Kent staff Joe Rigby and Morgan Barrie held an information stall distributing leaflets and talking to members of the public about the project. The festival provided an effective platform to communicate the aims and successes of the LIFE R4ever Kent project.

As part of the event programme, a presentation was delivered on the LIFE R4ever Kent project, **with 40+ people in attendance**. The presentation highlighted ongoing efforts to restore the River Kent SAC/SSSI and its associated habitats and species.

The session aimed to:

- Raise awareness of river restoration and catchment management
- Showcase practical conservation actions
- Demonstrate the link between land management and river ecology
- Encourage local involvement in nature recovery

Presentation Summary: The presentation introduced the River Kent catchment and the reasons for its national and international designations as a SSSI/SAC. It outlined the partnership approach of the project involving Natural England, the Environment Agency, South Cumbria Rivers Trust and the Freshwater Biological Association. The talk highlighted the complex lifecycle of the Freshwater Pearl Mussel, emphasising the need for long-term, catchment-scale management, demonstrating the relevance of technical river restoration concepts and practices for the conservation of the local river, and reported on the progress of the LIFE R4ever Kent project so far.

The session was well attended, with a mixed audience including local residents, farmers and land managers, conservation professionals and members of the public interested in nature recovery.

Engagement was strong, with discussion focusing on practical delivery of restoration works, funding opportunities and agri-environment schemes, balancing farming and conservation, and local water quality concerns.





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Key Outcomes:

- Raised awareness of the ecological importance of the River Kent SAC/SSSI
- Improved understanding of catchment pressures and restoration solutions
- Promoted partnership working across organisations and land managers
- Encouraged participation in conservation initiatives and monitoring
- The event also reinforced the value of community engagement in delivering long-term environmental outcomes.

Written by: Joe Rigby



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